

## F.Y.I.

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## INTENSIVE RE-ENTRY UNIT STAFF WORK TO PREPARE PAROLEES

The Intensive Parole Re-entry Unit (IRU) was developed under the Michigan Prisoner ReEntry Initiative (MPRI) to assist prisoners in developing strategies that will enable them to successfully complete parole and become productive citizens within the community.

The program is voluntary and eligibility is determined by the Parole Board. The Cooper Street Correctional Facility (JCS) in Jackson and the Huron Valley Complex-Women (WHV) in Ypsilanti, are currently designated as Intensive Re-entry Units.

In the IRU a prisoner is immersed in concentrated programming within the facility and works with Field Operations Administration (FOA) staff and community transition teams to develop a comprehensive parole release plan.

"In this program prisoners are immediately plugged into



Cooper Street Correctional Facility IRU transition team members Jim Little, staff social worker; ARUS Chad Williams; IRU Agent Frank Reese; Parole agent Tony Pascarella; ARUS Andrew Benn and IRU agent John Yirku set up for a video conference meeting with Grand Rapids area team members Sean Wheeler, parole officer; Marcie Ellison, Project Rehab; Yvonne Jackson, MPRI community coordinator; and Shellie Cole, In reach coordinator Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services.

the services they need," said Warden Bruce Curtis, Cooper Street Correctional Facility. "It's designed to address the individual needs of each prisoner, from cognitive restructuring to parenting skills."

The field agents inside the institution, referred to as re-entry agents, work in conjunction with

Correctional Facility Administration (CFA) staff, the prisoner, and the community to develop the prisoner's Transition Accountability Plan (TAP). The TAP identifies the prisoner's strengths and needs and breaks down into nine categories: housing, employment, educational/vocational/employment training,

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## IRU STAFF WORK TO PREPARE PAROLEES CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



Parole agent Tony Pascarella works with the IRU transition team.

substance abuse, mental health, physical health, income support, family reunification and transportation issues.

The re-entry agent also works on developing updated parole placement information with the prisoner to identify the best possible placement for their release.

“We have a social worker on staff who works on family reunification and placement issues,” said Warden Curtis. “He addresses problems and tries to anticipate what will work best for the prisoner in terms of placement.”

Information gathered during the social worker’s interview is then forwarded to FOA staff and the community transition team, who in turn utilize the information to develop the prisoner’s parole release plan.

“One of the advantages to this program is the enhanced communication between FOA and CFA,” said Warden Curtis.

Transition teams, comprised of CFA and FOA staff and community agencies and service providers, work with the prisoner inside the institution to develop the prisoner’s parole release plan. They match a prisoner’s needs with available services in the community such as substance abuse, health care, employment and housing assistance to help develop a smoother transition back into the community.

The teams meet individually with prisoners to discuss their areas of need through visits at the facility or by video conferencing.

“We have people from all over the state in this program so many of the transition team visits are done by video,” said Warden Curtis. “As the program expands we expect to do more video-conferencing visits.”

Reunification sessions are another important element in the program. The sessions are meetings between the prisoner and their family or support system to discuss and resolve issues that may act as a barrier for the prisoner’s success in the community.

A major distinction between the IRU and other facilities is the intense programming provided to prisoners. Day rooms and TV rooms are used as class rooms throughout the day and sometimes in the evenings as well.

“The prisoners spend the day studying, taking classes or completing programming,” said Warden Curtis. “The one thing they need to understand is that if they want to be successful in the community they need to learn how to get up every day and have structure in their lives.”

The women’s program at Huron Valley differs in that it operates on a closed-entry format meaning that the participants enter the unit in groups and remain in their group throughout the 16-week program.

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Social worker Jim Little addresses reunification issues with parolees.

## IRU STAFF WORK TO PREPARE PAROLEES CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Each prisoner participates in a series of common programming such as prerelease, cognitive restructuring and anger management. They also choose a selection of electives which can focus on budgeting, fair housing issues, child care concerns and domestic violence. The program is continually being refined as well.

“We listen to what the women have to say about the program so if we need to do some fine tuning or if someone has special needs we can work on them,” said WHV Warden Susan Davis.

It was discovered that one of the IRU candidates needed intensive tutoring from school staff in order to be able to fully participate in the program. The parole board agreed to defer her until her reading skills improved. She was then able to successfully complete the next IRU session.

In addition the Intensive Re-entry Unit works closely with the Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (RSAT) staff for those with severe substance abuse problems.

Fortunately WHV is located in Washtenaw County, a resource-rich area with a number of social service agencies and other providers.

“We’re forming nice partnerships with those outside the facility,” said Warden Davis. “And we are drawing on our own staff to step outside their traditional roles. For instance our finance person teaches budgeting skills.”

Facility staff also work closely with the institutional parole officer.

“Our re-entry agent is an integral part of the team and institution staff is learning a tremendous amount about parole,” said Warden Davis. “She has offered innovative ideas that we have been able to put in place.”

The fifth group of women has recently entered the IRU. The program has the capacity to accommodate 52 prisoners with 26 prisoners transferred every two months.

The IRU program at JCS runs for four months and has the capacity to accommodate 480 prisoners.

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## NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS’ RIGHTS WEEK IS APRIL 23-29

Each April since 1981, National Crime Victims’ Rights Week (NCVRW) promotes and recognizes victims’ rights and services through events such as public rallies and candlelight vigils.

This year’s theme—*Victims’ Rights: Strength in Unity*—pays tribute to crime victims and survivors who, for many decades, have joined together in mutual support and advocacy to promote

victims’ rights and services. It also recognizes the ongoing efforts of countless victim service providers, justice professionals, and allied professionals and volunteers who dedicate their lives to helping victims of crime.

One of those providers, The Crime Victim Foundation, is a non-profit foundation working solely for the purpose of helping victims of crimes in Michigan. They provide last

resort assistance to crime victims in Michigan who have an immediate and critical need and for whom no other financial resource is available.

MDOC Crime Victim Services (CVS) will be hosting several activities throughout April in recognition of victims. The unit will coordinate a bake sale, two 50/50 drawings, and a pop can drive within Central Office. All monies raised will be presented to

the Crime Victim Foundation at the Candlelight Vigil in the rotunda of the State Capital on Wednesday, April 26, 2006. In addition to fund-raising efforts, CVS will be inserting commemorative bookmarks in the notification letters sent to registered victims and embarking on an educational awareness campaign on the history of the Crime Victims’ Rights movement.

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## COMMUNICATION INCLUDES LISTENING

Nothing gets done without communication and in a department as large and geographically diverse as corrections, adequate communication is critical not only to the workings of the department but also to the well-being of staff.

BY  
**GAIL MADZIAR**  
**FYI EDITOR**

Poor communications with managers has been found to be the number one stressor at work. The second top stressor is lack of communications among co-workers.

Managers and supervisors have a responsibility to provide instruction and information to their direct reports. Supervisors should think about how much they are withholding and whether or not some of that information can be shared.

“By empowering employees with information, managers will receive better communication and information about what is actually going on in return,” said Rosanne Leland, MDOC Work/Life Services Coordinator.

A common complaint among line staff is that their direct supervisors don’t really listen to them when they do communicate.

“Employees will perform better if they know that management listens to them and takes their ideas seriously,” said Leland. “Communication is not just talking, it’s listening.”

Warden Sherry Burt, Southern Michigan Correctional Facility (JMF), agrees.

“One of the things I often hear from staff is that management doesn’t listen and doesn’t know what they are going through,” said Warden Burt. “It’s not just about sharing information. Sometimes it’s about listening to what they have to say.”

She also suggests that first line supervisors find time to get up and walk away from the paperwork and spend some time with staff.

“As a department we need to look at encouraging supervisors to spend quality time with staff while they are making their rounds,” added Warden Burt. “There must be a balance.”

Co-workers must make the effort to communicate with one another as well. By taking the initiative to communicate more, overall job performance and satisfaction will increase. More communication means fewer misunderstandings and a greater feeling of inclusion among staff.

“Often times the problem lies with the fact that the communication goes only to a certain level. If first shift doesn’t take the time to pass information about the day’s events to second shift, those employees are at a disadvantage when it comes to performing their jobs safely,” said Warden Burt.

At JMF control center officers on the midnight shift start a bulletin about what has happened during the shift. It’s then available at roll call and each shift adds to the running log of events.

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## LISTENING IS ESSENTIAL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

"It only takes a few minutes to share information like did we find a weapon, was it a peaceful day or were there issues," said Warden Burt.

Whether you are in an office or work in a facility, it's important for supervisors to talk with staff regularly rather than simply

addressing problems when they crop up.

"Ask them how things are going; if they have any concerns; or if there is anything they want to talk about," suggested Warden Burt.

Trust and respect also have a tremendous impact on communication. It's not always just what is said, it's also how it's said.

Managers and co-workers alike should ask themselves if they communicate politely and respectfully or if they

bark orders or use what is euphemistically referred to as prison language. Tone of voice and body language offer significant meaning to any exchange of communication.

"Communication is a two-way street, so it is up to each individual to take responsibility for communication in their work place. If you need more information ask for it," said Leland. "Practice listening, really hearing and taking in what others are saying to you."

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***"Respect is the cornerstone of all our interactions and behaviors. We acknowledge the dignity and worth of one another and strive never to diminish another by our conduct or our attitudes."***

**This quote says it all. It was written by students at the Mariner High School in Everett Washington and was shared with me by by RUO Thomas Burke at the Charles Egeler Reception and Guidance Center."**

**—Warden Sherry Burt**

## IT'S TIME TO THINK ABOUT GOLF

The fourth annual minority advisory panel golf outing is scheduled for May 25. Cost for the four-person scramble is \$240 per team. Shotgun start is at 10:00 a.m. Deadline for entries is May 18. For more information contact Stan Harris (517) 335-1413.

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## HOCKEY GAME BENEFITS SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Oaks Correctional Facility staff and friends raised funds for Area 24 Special Olympics with a hockey game played on January 21 at West Shore Ice Arena. Approximately 300 people attended, raising \$1,944. The game was won by the "Blue Team" by a score of 9-6. At left: C/O Todd Bassett, Oaks Correctional Facility, is the Blue Team goalie.

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## GRAND RAPIDS CORRECTIONS CENTER STAFF EARN AWARDS



From left: C/O Steve Hunt, C/O Roger Pate, Deputy Director Joan Yukins and CRR John Dutcher

Grand Rapids Corrections Center staff C/O Steve Hunt, C/O Roger Pate and Corrections Resident Representative John Dutcher were presented with the department's Lifesaving Award for their assistance to an unresponsive inmate.

They administered CPR and were required to use the AED six times to start the prisoner's heart. He was transported by ambulance to a local hospital.

"Without the outstanding action by these corrections center staff, the victim would not have made it to the hospital," said Deputy Director Joan Yukins.

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## EMPLOYEE MEDIA CONTACT

Please remember to forward any calls or e-mails you might receive from the media to the Public Information Office at (517) 373-6391 or e-mail Leo Lalonde at [lalondlr@michigan.gov](mailto:lalondlr@michigan.gov).

Feel free to call the PIO office if you have any questions, or you may wish to review Policy Directive 01-06-130 paragraphs J and K—Staff Contact with News Media Representatives.

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## THE BUDGET PROCESS UNFOLDS

The department presented its Fiscal Year 2007 Strategic Plan to the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees last week. Director Patricia Caruso provided an overview of department goals while Barry Wickman, MDOC administrator for the Bureau of Fiscal Management, outlined strategies and priorities for FY07.

This week the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Corrections and Judiciary reported the appropriations bill out to the full Senate Appropriations Subcommittee. Action is expected to be taken by the full committee next week.

Budget highlights included:

- \$1.6 billion for prisons and camps
- Funding for MPRI first and second round sites and other MPRI projects
- Closing Camp Brighton and transfer bed funding to more efficient sites
- Consolidating operations at Huron Valley Complex
- \$11.8 million for training 714 new corrections officers
- \$48.6 million for community corrections programs
- \$170 million for oversight of 70,000 offenders under community supervision
- \$1.7 million for new GPS electronic monitoring system for 500 felons.

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## **SIX MONTHS AFTER KATRINA AND RITA: A CONVERSATION WITH JANNITTA ANTOINE, DEPUTY SECRETARY, LOUISIANA CORRECTIONS BY LUELLA BURKE**

Jannitta has a new dog. In the immediate aftermath of Katrina, a DOC staff person returning home after a long day of dealing with death, saw something moving in the flood waters. Despite exhaustion, the DOC employee jumped in the water..... something was alive! It was a dog, a dog that now belongs to Jannitta.

Jannitta asked, "Did you know the main post office in New Orleans just reopened? Just. Do you know there are whole communities that still do not have electrical power or safe water? Do you know what it is like to lose all records of your life? We have many employees who come to work every day who still have no place to call home. Employees who lost everything, working with no place to call home."

Jannitta went on to say that she is certain that the majority of individuals whose lives were devastated by Katrina and/or Rita have not even begun to process the entirety of their loss.

"We have staff coming to work so they can forget what they have to deal with at home," she added.

As Katrina approached, Jannitta left work to take a quick shower at home, knowing she was facing some long work hours. Little did she know. Before heading back to the office she called in for an update and while on the phone the wind became violent. A building flew by her window. She saw a tractor standing in the field, her tractor, absent its home, the building that flew by the window.

But what Jannitta really wants to share with you is a few examples of how the dollars AWEC and other organizations raised were used for Katrina/Rita correctional employee victims:

An office worker lost her home, lost everything to Katrina. Two days later her husband died of a heart attack. She received financial help for burial expenses.

A probation employee who lost all was housed on one of the cruise ships. After three weeks she learned that the keys to her trailer would be delivered Monday. It was Friday. She died over the weekend. Her children were given financial assistance to bury their mother. To save dollars, the children chose cremation.

A probation officer, his wife and severely disabled 10-year-old son lost all. The son cannot move his limbs and requires a feeding tube. The officer moved his family to Florida where they would have a place to stay, but during the move the son developed pneumonia, spending three weeks in a Florida hospital. The officer came back to Louisiana to find a place for his family to live and to work his cases. Returning to Louisiana the son came down with a stomach virus and again is hospitalized. This family has received significant assistance from relief dollars.

An officer who lived in St. Bernard Parish lost his home and belongings to Katrina. A family of seven and no flood insurance. A house to rent was found 100 miles west of St. Bernard Parish. Many helped furnish the rented house. The family settled in....RITA HIT...all was again lost. Immediate assistance from relief funds was provided.

Losing all, a parole board member lived with his elderly mother in a truck. He reported to work without fail, perhaps to escape the truck, perhaps to keep his mind off of the tragedy of his situation. Your dollars helped this individual and his mother with housing. As Jannitta pointed out, these stories are not even the tip of the iceberg. The Louisiana folks thank all who contributed to the relief fund.

## VACATIONING STAFF VISITS BERLIN PRISON

Lt. Keith Stillabower, Chippewa Correctional Facility, recently traveled to Germany to visit relatives and had the opportunity to tour JVA Tegel in Berlin, the largest prison in Germany.

The prison was originally built in the 1890s and is surrounded by a 4,352 foot perimeter fence with 13 gun towers.

The prison houses 1,700 prisoners and has a staff of 846 along with 128 volunteers.

Classification levels range from prisoners who would be equivalent to the level in a Michigan camp to several classes of segregation.

The prison has also housed POWs from both world wars and also Nazis

awaiting trial after World War II.

“While much of the programming and prisoner treatment is very similar to Michigan there are differences,” said Stillabower. “One unique problem in Tegel is the varied backgrounds and languages of the people incarcerated there.”

Approximately 33 percent of the population are foreign prisoners, mostly Turkish or Polish, but there are prisoners from 60 different countries.

“The prison appeared to be run very efficiently and was extremely clean and quite,” said Stillabower. “The programming and vocational training showed a dedication to rehabilitation and much attention was also being paid to maintaining a prisoner’s connection to the community.”



In the Teilanstalt V housing unit, each cell (shown above) has its own separate bathroom.

At the end of the hall is a kitchen with refrigerators furnished for the prisoners. Each refrigerator is divided into locking boxes with one for each prisoner so they may store perishable food items purchased in the store.

Prisoners in this unit must be employed, test drug free and speak German.

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Aerial view of JVA Tegel in Berlin.

## 20TH ANNUAL CORRECTIONS GOLF OUTING TO BENEFIT SPECIAL OLYMPICS

The 20th Annual Corrections Golf Outing to benefit Special Olympics will be held June 9, 2006 at the IMA Brookwood Golf Club, 6045 Davison Rd., Burton, Michigan 48509 (810) 742-7930. Cost is \$ 260 per team. Registration begins at 8 a.m. with a shotgun start at 9:30 a.m. Checks must be received by May 19, 2006.

Make checks payable to Elaine Swift, and mail them to 4403 Springbrook Dr., Swartz Creek, Michigan 48473. Contact Kim Eisenbeis 248-681-1705 x226 or Elaine Swift 248-858-5257 for more information.

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